



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Chairman Jerome E. Horton**

**4<sup>th</sup> District – Los Angeles**

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## **BOE Postpones Collection of Fire Prevention Fees**

**Sacramento** – The California State Board of Equalization (BOE) has been contacted by CAL FIRE with a request to postpone fire prevention fee billings for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

The Chairman of the Board of Equalization, Jerome E. Horton, has been informed that the delay in the collection of these fees is a result of workload issues created by a high number of appeals and he hopes this postponement will give CAL FIRE more time to assure more accurate billing information.

The fire prevention fee funds are administered by CAL FIRE. Current state law requires the BOE to bill the owners of habitable structures located within the State Responsibility Area (SRA), and collect the fees.

However, on March 12, 2013, the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association filed a lawsuit against CAL FIRE and the Board of Equalization (BOE), challenging the constitutionality of the measure.

In a statement released today, Chairman Horton said, "Until the Courts decide the constitutionality of this legislation, it remains the law and the Board has no alternative but to follow the law which gives CAL FIRE the authority to direct the board to delay the collection of the fee," concluded Horton. "Time will determine whether these funds were necessary to help prevent and manage fires in certain areas and/or, whether the law is constitutional. If the law is found to be unconstitutional, we will not permit these fees to further burden feepayers."

The BOE is working closely with CAL FIRE to determine next steps. As more information becomes available, BOE will update its [fire prevention fee media resources page](#).

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Elected in 2010, Chairman Jerome E. Horton is the Fourth District Member of the California State Board of Equalization, representing more than 8.5 million residents in Los Angeles County. He is also the Board of Equalization's Legislative Committee Chairman. He is the first to serve on the Board of Equalization with over 21 years of experience at the BOE. Horton previously served as an Assembly Member of the California State Assembly from 2000-2006.

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The five-member California State Board of Equalization is a publicly elected tax board. The Board of Equalization collects more than \$53.7 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

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